Regional T.V. Services in States

1767. DR. C. SILVERA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether regional T.V. service has been introduced in some States recently;

(b) if so, the features of the service;

(c) whether the regional T.V. service will benefit the States in North Eastern region;

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether Government propose to provide similar regional T.V. service in other States of the country in future; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRUA VYAS): (a) and(b). Yes, Sir. Satellite-derived regional TV service was introduced in the States of Orissa and West Bengal recently so as to enable all the TV transmitters in these States to relay regional service programmes of Doordarshan Kendras at Cuttack and Calcutta respectively.

(c) and (d). Whereas Assamese news bulletin for a duration of 15 minutes is at present relayed via satellite by all the TV transmitters in Assam, satellite-derived regional service for relay of regional programmes in the States of North Eastern region is planned to be introduced during VIII Plan subject to availability of requisite space segment and adequate resources for the purpose.

(e) and (f). Yes, Sir. Regional Service is envisaged to be provided in other States depending upon future availability of adequate space segment and allocation of necessary funds by the Planning Commission.

Privatisation of Telecom Network

1768. SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN:
SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to privatise the Telecom Network in the Metropolitan Regions; and

(b) if so, the details of the policy contemplated?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

Scarcity of Non-Commercial Fuels

1769. SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scientific estimates exist of the demand for cooking fuel in domestic sector, and has any policy been laid down for its production and distribution, particularly in the context of shortage of wood and environmental concerns;

(b) whether any estimates exist of the fuel consumption of cowdung, fire-wood, charcoal, and other vegetable Wastes in the rural areas;

(c) whether there is an acute scarcity of these non-commercial fuels used in the domestic sector; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to meet the shortage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) As per studies conducted by the Advisory Board on Energy, an average household consumes about 3.5 tonnes of biomass per year in the form of fuel for cooking and heating in domestic sector. Government has adopted certain strategies, like increased production by raising fuelwood plantations; conservation of energy through better and efficient devices etc.

(b) It has been estimated that in rural areas firewood contributes as high as 68.5% of the total energy consumption followed by animal dung (8.3%), Coal products (2.3%) and other (3.4%).

(c) and (d). There is a gap between demand and supply of non-commercial fuels used in the domestic sector. To bridge the gap between demand and supply of non-commercial fuels, the Government has taken the following steps:-

(i) Increase in production by raising fueiwood plantations;

(ii) Conserving fuel by improving the efficiency of Chulhas.

(iii) Replacement of wood fuel with solar cookers, biogas, LPG, etc.

[*Translation*]

Karnapura Thermal Power Projects in Bihar

1779. SHRI UPENDRA NATH VERMA: Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up Karnapura Thermal Power Station in Tandva region in Chatra district of Bihar in collaboration with the Australian Government; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) and (b). A proposal has been received from National Thermal Power Corporation for setting up a (2x500 MW) Coal-based Super Thermal Power Project at North Karanpura (Tandwa site) in Hazaribagh District of Bihar. The proposal has been techno-economically cleared by the Central Electricity Authority subject to certain conditions including clearance from environmental angle, confirmation of water availability etc. The project will require investment approval after these issues are settled. No Australian collaboration for this project has been envisaged at present.

Proposal to Increase Duration of Parliament New on Doordarshan

1771. SHRI MRUTYUNJAYA NAYAK:
SHRI BARE LAL JATAV:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to increase the duration of Parliament News on Doordarshan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTRY IN THE MINISTSRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) There is no proposal at present.